



DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Federal Disaster Loans for
Homeowners, Renters and Businesses of All Sizes

U. S. Small Business Administration
P. O. Box 419004, Sacramento, CA 95841-9004

Disaster Area 4 Office
(800) 488-5323 (916) 735-1500

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January 9, 2004

Press Release

DISASTER LOANS FROM SBA SET RECORD AMOUNT FOR FIRE DISASTERS

Sacramento, CA –The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has set an all-time record for fire disaster lending in response to the wildfires that swept Southern California in October and November, providing \$130,251,500 in low-interest disaster loans to help individuals and businesses recover from the deadly blazes.

The level of lending for this disaster surpassed the Oakland Hills firestorm in 1991, which had been the costliest fire disaster in SBA history. Following that catastrophe, SBA disaster loan assistance topped \$129 million.

“The record level of loans to people who suffered from the destruction caused by these fires is one measure of the effort we have put into helping finance their recovery,” said SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto. “We have accomplished a great deal in a short time, but we understand that our mission is far from over, and we will continue to work closely with each affected homeowner, renter or business owner to make SBA financing available to help put people back in their homes and back to work.

“Rebuilding is a team effort, involving the dedication of disaster relief employees and the determination of Southern Californians to rebuild their homes, businesses and communities,” Barreto said. “There is still a long road ahead, but today marks a significant milestone, and there can be no doubt we are making real progress.”

The SBA helps homeowners and renters, businesses of all sizes and private, nonprofit organizations fund repairs or rebuilding efforts, and cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster damaged personal property. SBA disaster loans cover uninsured or uncompensated losses and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations. They also provide a significant economic stimulus in disaster-ravaged communities, helping spur employment and stabilizing tax bases.

Administrator Barreto noted some similarities between the wildfires in 2003 and the Oakland Hills fire: both occurred in October, were exacerbated by fierce and unpredictable winds, presented difficult access for rescuers and firefighters, destroyed more than 3,000 structures, and will require a lengthy rebuilding process.

Barreto encouraged all individuals and business owners who suffered damage as a result of the fires to register for Federal and state disaster assistance programs by calling the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s toll-free registration number at (800) 621-3362. Victims may also visit any one of the SBA Disaster Centers to receive program information or help in completing and submitting their applications.

For more information on SBA’s disaster assistance programs, individuals and business owners may call toll-free (800) 488-5323. Hearing impaired individuals may call (916) 735-1683. The deadline to return applications for property damage has been extended to **January 9, 2004**. Applications for economic injury must be returned by **July 27, 2004**.

End

See attached list of Assistance Centers

Southern California Fires SBA Disaster Center Locations

01/09/04

SBA DISASTER CENTER	<u>SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY</u> 105 N. Leland Norton Way (Airport Terminal Building) San Bernardino, CA 92408	HOURS: Monday – Friday 9:00 am – 6:00 pm <i>Change of hours Saturday, Jan. 10</i> Monday – Friday 10:00 am – 6:00 pm Saturday 9:00 am – 2:00 pm Open until further notice
SBA DISASTER CENTER	<u>SAN DIEGO COUNTY</u> Old Grossmont Bank Building 1347 Tavern Road, Suite 30 (in Alpine Creek Shopping Center) Alpine, CA 91901	HOURS: Monday – Friday 9:00 am – 6:00 pm <i>Change of hours Saturday, Jan. 10</i> Monday – Friday 10:00 am – 6:00 pm Saturday 9:00 am – 2:00 pm Open until further notice
SBA DISASTER CENTER	<u>SAN DIEGO COUNTY</u> Ramona Community Resource Center Health and Human Services Agency 1521 Main Street (next to the library and Sheriff's Dept.) Ramona, CA 92065	HOURS: Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 4:30 pm Open until further notice
SBA DISASTER CENTER	<u>SAN DIEGO COUNTY</u> Scripps Ranch Community Service Center 11885 Cypress Canyon Road (across from Thurgood Marshall Middle School) San Diego, CA 92131	HOURS: <i>Opens Saturday, Jan. 10</i> Monday – Friday 10:00 am – 6:00 pm Saturday 9:00 am – 2:00 pm Open until further notice
SBA DISASTER CENTER	<u>SAN DIEGO COUNTY</u> 28565 Cole Grade Road (Valley Center Road Maintenance section) Valley Center, CA 92082	HOURS: Monday – Friday 9:00 am – 6:00 pm <i>Change of hours Saturday, Jan. 10</i> Monday – Friday 10:00 am – 6:00 pm Saturday 9:00 am – 2:00 pm Open until further notice